

**Responses to Questions for Senate Confirmation Hearing
By the Senate Committee on Higher Education
For the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i**

**Ronald Montgomery
April 13, 2010**

1. What motivated you to apply to be a member of the Board of Regents, and how are you uniquely qualified to represent your geographic constituency?

When I learned of the upcoming vacancy for the Maui seat on the Board of Regents, I felt the position required experience in areas near to my heart. Although I am hesitant to use the term “uniquely qualified” in describing myself, I do believe that I have a combination of experiences that are applicable to this position, including:

- > over 20+ years experience in the computer industry, some during times of economic downturn;
- > my current position as an instructor for the University of Phoenix in an on-line, distant-learning environment;
- > teaching a broad spectrum of students from recent high school graduates to older students returning to college to improve their career opportunities; and
- > continuing and broadening my commitment to public service.

2. In looking at the University's strategic plan and the goals laid out by President Greenwood in her State of the University of Hawai'i system, what particular areas are of particular interest to you, and how will your particular skill sets and experiences help to move these areas forward?

Although President Greenwood presented three major strategic initiatives in the State of University of Hawai'i system, there were other ideas discussed that I have an interest in as well. I will address the major three first.

The first area of interest was President Greenwood's second major initiative: “Contribute positively to the workforce and the economy.” The university and college system help drive the future success of the State through today's students; tomorrow's leaders.

I am particularly interested in the announced Presidential Advisory Group of Experts chartered to understand “how the best universities achieve their impact” for innovation and technology transfer. I would suggest that the Advisory Group also contacts and understands best practices of respected venture capital firms.

Having worked in the Silicon Valley in young computer companies, including one start up

company, I am familiar with the potential contributions a university can make to the economy by encouraging “incubator” work in the university. Professors at leading universities in northern California have “spun off” many Silicon Valley companies making this area one of the wealthiest regions in the country.

As Hawai’i grows, and in particular on the Neighbor Islands, there will be increasing needs for expertise in healthcare, energy production, teaching and other disciplines. It is imperative that the local colleges on the Neighbor islands be supported to meet these needs.

As a State, and as a nation, we must regain our place in the world as a leader in innovation. We are not teaching, today, the courses required for the exciting new careers that will exist in 10 or 20 years. Only through basic, creative research can we hope to create and develop the curricula that will be needed for our future success.

My experience in a start up company (that failed) taught me the importance of not only innovation, but also timing. The technology we were working on is just now beginning to be implemented – nine years later! The Board of Regents holds the same responsibility as a Board of Directors for a start up company to identify risks, competitors and opportunities.

The second area of interest for me is in President Greenwood’s first broad objective: “Increase the number of educated citizens”. Some of the comments she made mirror my current teaching assignments. Most of my students are older, have families and jobs, and yet find the need to return to school to help secure and advance their careers. Many of my students are below “the norm” in academic skills.

Recent reports from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) (<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/about/current.asp>) indicate only 38% of students in tested grades perform at their grade level in reading and math. As these students enter college or the workforce they discover that these skills are essential for success. In my current teaching assignments I find it necessary to offer remedial training in basic skills as well as teaching the content area of my class. It makes much more sense to improve these skills at an earlier age making the college learning experience more valuable.

I am not familiar enough with the P20 or the “Step Up” programs to have an opinion as to whether they will fulfill this need, but I do know, that for my own teaching experience, this is an important area and I am interested in becoming a part of it.

The third area of interest is the concept of advancing “the University of Hawai’i’s national reputation for excellence.” However, I have a different view than President Greenwood’s. Although I do understand the importance of creating and maintaining “world class” facilities to attract the brightest talent and students, my interests lie in other areas.

President Greenwood stated, “all great universities will become global universities”. A strategic vision could be developed to make the University of Hawai’i a leader in this practice. Rather than try to compete for or duplicate expertise for strategic academic areas, it might be possible to partner with other universities and other institutions to expand the concept of “distant learning”. Why not “recruit” a renowned expert in a specific field and “trade” classes and research with other universities in exchange for the same from their specialty areas?

Another concept in this area of interest is creating a “charter school” approach to the University. Areas of expertise and their associated faculty and facilities could be developed on Neighbor islands: sustainable energy on Maui; astronomy on Maui and Hawai’i; geothermal energy on Hawai’i; and botany, marine, geology and ornithology sciences on Kauai. Again, curricula and research could be developed and facilities maintained by a distributed workforce while sharing knowledge through the entire university system and beyond.

In addition to these three important strategic objectives, I have interests in other areas mentioned in the State of University of Hawai’i system speech. My career included work in process development and re-engineering, organizational development and strategic planning including development of a “Balanced Scorecard”. From this, I have worked to develop “SWOT Analysis”, and alignment of goals with different functional groups.

It would probably be unrealistic to think I could effectively participate in all of these interests, but I am certain I would find areas of interest in which to participate.

3. As a Regent, what will be your top three priorities for the University?

I changed the order of the previous question and this one because it made more sense to me to discuss my areas of interest and experience prior to discussing my top priorities. Based on the previous discussion, my top three priorities would be:

- > Development of a “venture capital” environment for the University - This would be related to the Presidential Advisory Group of Experts’ work and modeling a program based on best practices of universities and venture capital firms skilled in technology development and transfer.

- > Development of “the next generation” of distant learning - Develop a proposal to leverage new technologies like the Apple iPad. Reduce student costs by having textbooks downloadable at a lower price than hardcopy editions (of course hardcopy versions would also be available). Develop coursework that utilizes Web-based media and other resources. Use interactive technologies for collaborative work including face-to-face interaction with professors, TAs and other students to maintain a “virtual” classroom.

- > Participate in development of an “18-month rolling” strategic plan, include benchmarking and metrics and utilize process improvements to develop additional efficiencies.

4. We are currently faced with an unprecedented budget crisis. What ideas do you have for generating revenue for the University and how we approach any cuts that have to be made within the budget?

Coming from the computer industry the term “revenue” might have a different meaning for the University and government. From my perspective “revenue” can come from the following sources: funding from the government; tuition and other revenues from students; contributions from individuals, foundations and companies; other fees and royalties for use of University facilities, commodities and intellectual property; and monies obtained from bonds.

I found it interesting that after President Greenwood's speech, where she suggested issuing a general obligation bond and the University paying a part of the interest for 5-7 years, Speaker of the House, Calvin Say, commented that the University needed to become "better" even with less. I am not aware if President Greenwood's idea of a general obligation is being considered by the Legislature, but it is clear that the University will be tasked with operating with less State funding with the advancement of SB 2695. I would hope that as the economy improves, the State would restore and increase funding to support our shared belief that only through providing the best facilities and faculty can we hope to ensure leadership in education and innovation within the State of Hawai'i.

Until the economy recovers, additional revenues must come from other sources. One source that must be considered is increased student tuition and fees. One consideration would be to base tuition on the campus and academic track a student chooses. This approach relates, in part, to the next question. Perhaps the Manoa campus should become the "flagship" of Hawai'i's higher education. Top universities (<http://colleges.usnews.rankingsandreviews.com/best-colleges/national-top-public>) include U.C. Berkeley, the University of Virginia and the University of Michigan. Tuition for these three schools are \$10,000, \$9,900 and \$11,200 (12 credits), respectively for resident students and \$33,000, \$32,000 and \$33,800 (12 credits), respectively for out of state students. The tuition for the University of Hawai'i is \$3,800 for residents (full time) and \$10,500 for non-resident, full time students.

This is not to say that tuition at the University of Hawai'i should be tripled immediately, but if the University's strategic plan were to build centers of excellence in learning on par with the best public universities in the nation, there is no reason to not charge tuition at a comparable level. Creating a five-year strategic plan to benchmark and then lead other universities in targeted academic areas would lead to a matching increase in tuition.

Not every Hawai'i University or College would follow this path. There is still a need for educational opportunities for students to improve basic skills or learn important trades. Tuition and fees at the other Hawai'i colleges and universities could be maintained or raised, apportioned to their academic track.

Following a "charter school" approach, this would include increased tuition at other colleges and universities in the system. If the University of Hawai'i, Hilo, had one of the best astronomy degree programs in the nation, the tuition should reflect this.

The other area of revenue of interest to me is that of return on venture capital. The University and State government should work to create a venture capital fund for innovation in the university system. Investments would be accepted from individuals, venture capital funds, companies and government agencies. The fund would be managed by University business, accounting and content departmental experts with oversight from the State Department of Budget and Finance.

Venture capital money is commonly used to obtain facilities, and equipment and hire experts needed for the venture. In the University system, the same method could be used to help meet the strategic goals described in the State of the University of Hawai'i system speech.

When new opportunities are identified and funded, the University would hold “founders stock” in the new venture, as would other investors. The University’s stock would create a “vested interest” in proper management of the venture as the potential increase in value would create tremendous new opportunities for the University. It would also provide excellent “real-life” experiences for students and faculty and help create new career opportunities in the State.

It is important to also address the management of the University system in the light of budget cuts. Not being an “insider” to either the Board of Regents or the University system I can only comment based on the information available to the general public. However, it seems that President Greenwood has made decisions, difficult at times, to adjust to reduced funding. Until the economy turns, further cuts will be made and many of these will be difficult.

There are several ideas to consider and none of them would be popular. I read comments from a faculty member; I believe it was in the “American Studies” department. The comment was that the department produced a “net gain” for the University. If I remember correctly, the argument was made that because of awarded grants, the department paid for itself and had extra money for the University. Whether this account is completely accurate or not is not the point. The point is that each department should consider itself as an “academic center” with a budget and a need to establish the “value” of that department. This could be done in different ways other than financial measurements alone, but it would create a new “paradigm” for each department as they plan for the future in creating measureable “value” for students and the State.

A similar view could be taken for each University or College. If each campus were evaluated on costs as well as revenues and “value”, certain institutions might deserve additional funding to support a growing student population; or for becoming a “center of excellence” in academic area(s). Other campuses might be viewed as needing more funding in comparison to the value the campus returns. These campuses would need to develop new strategies to increase value, have budgets reduced or be “modified”. Having said this, I believe that every Neighbor Island should have at least one College or University. Any “modified” campus could still be used as a “distant learning” facility using advanced technology and less capital infrastructure to support learning opportunities.

I need to stress again that I am not an insider to the Board of Regents or the University system. The suggestions I have presented may have counter-arguments or obstacles that make them inappropriate. I present them rather as an insight into my thinking and how I would approach financial challenges in general.

5. How do you view the role of the system as it relates to the 10 campuses? Do you feel that the relationship as it exists now should be changed? How will you ensure equity of resources across all campuses?

My responses to the previous questions have indicated different opportunities for the 10 campuses: making the Manoa campus the “flagship” institution with increased entrance requirements; making other campuses “charter schools” excelling in curricula reflective of the uniqueness of each island; and modifying other sites to take advantage of the distributed expertise within the system through advanced distant-learning technology. Even with strategic advances, providing education to improve basic skills and developing important specialty trade

skills should remain a priority.

The question becomes “should” these changes be made? I can only answer that these or other changes “could” be made. Every university system must consider “reinventing” itself to meet the new challenges created with changes in enrollment, economies and the different needs these changes create.

The university system cannot be “all things to all people”. Equity of resources across all campuses can only come by evaluating the changes that occur in each community, and the resulting needs, and allocating resources to support the skills that are now required.

6. What kind of relationship do you feel should exist between the University and the Legislature? More specifically, how do you view the relationship between the Board of Regents and the Legislature?

There are established relationships between the Board of Regents, the President of the University of Hawai'i and the Legislature. The Board develops policy and oversees the operation of the University through the President. Because the Board might create strategic plans that affect State laws I do see the Chair of the Board providing information to the Legislature to develop or modify laws that support these plans.

For example, if a venture capital model were developed for technology transfer, the Legislature might develop tax incentives to encourage investment in the beginning, re-investment of capital gains and also establishing lower taxes on reasonable profits for return on investments. The Board of Regents might provide background on a program.

I also see the Board of Regents as a reporting agency to the Legislature to present progress in achieving strategic milestones and performance to critical measurements. In turn, the Legislature needs to provide strategic direction representing the needs of their constituencies so the University can work to meet those needs. For this relationship to succeed, the Legislature and the Board must honor the “contracts” made with each other: identify strategic needs, establish methods and goals, agree to resources required and establish measurements that ensure accountability. One can only expect to get better with less for only so long. You, as Senators, deal with this every day.

Having said the above, I do believe that the relationship between the Board and the Legislature is secondary to that between the Legislature and the President of the University.

7. Do you have any real or perceived conflicts of interest to disclose?

I am currently an Instructor with the University of Phoenix teaching Environmental Science, Introduction to Information Technology, several business classes including International Business and Cultural Diversity.

I am a registered student at the University of Hawai'i, Maui College although I am not currently enrolled in any classes.

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March 30, 2010

The Honorable Jill N. Tokuda, Chair
Senate Committee on Higher Education
Hawai'i State Senate
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 218
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Senator Tokuda:

**SUBJECT: LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION ON BEHALF OF RON MONTGOMERY,
BOARD OF REGENTS**

I am writing to recommend for your consideration the application of Mr. Ron Montgomery for the Board of Regents. He is committed to community service, has the capacity for objective and impartial decision-making, knowledge and experience related to education, capacity for collaborative leadership, and experience governing complex organizations.

Mr. Montgomery has over 20 years of work experience with Silicon Valley computer companies including 16 years of middle and executive management in business operations. In addition, Mr. Montgomery has over seven years of experience teaching at the high school, community college and university levels. Although semi-retired, Mr. Montgomery continues to teach business and environmental science classes in a computer-based, distant learning environment and commits time to organizations for the betterment of the Maui community.

Mr. Montgomery has a proven record of contributing to the community through his work to bring better healthcare to the island of Maui. He serves on the Board of the Kula Community Association as Vice President of the Board, and Chair of the Water and Sustainability Committee. Mr. Montgomery also continues to teach today because of his strong belief in continuing education. This drives his desire to participate in the advancement of higher education in the State of Hawai'i.

I have personally and professionally known Mr. Montgomery for a number of years and have the highest respect for him. Please consider Mr. Ron Montgomery for the position on The University of Hawai'i Board of Regents.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Gladys C. Baisa in cursive script.
GLADYS C. BAISA
Council Member

Gina Flammer
1304 Naalae Road
Kula, Hawaii 96790

March 27, 2010

Senator Jill N. Tokuda
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 218
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: Governor's message 379: Appointment of Ronald Montgomery to
the University of Hawaii Board of Regents


Aloha Senator Tokuda,

I am writing to express my support for Ron Montgomery for the University of Hawaii Board of Regents. Mr. Montgomery is an excellent choice for the position. I know Mr. Montgomery through his work with the Kula Community Association where he has been an outstanding Board member and Vice-President. Mr. Montgomery is able to see the many sides of complicated issues as well as the big picture. He is able to evaluate ideas and problems with objectivity and has an unusual ability to provide a fresh way of looking at things. Mr. Montgomery is a team player able to discuss contentious issues with objectivity and a respect for others. His unique ability to get others to consider all angles and new ideas is extremely beneficial. Equally impressive is his respect for and encouragement of divergent views, ability to find common ground and then to create consensus over difficult issues.

The Board of Regents is tasked with the important job of overseeing the management and operation of the University. Our current fiscally challenging environment is not likely to significantly improve for quite some time leaving the University system in a position to make difficult choices. This is the environment where I am confident Mr. Montgomery will excel. His previous management experience has given him the ability to work in challenging environments and impart the importance of fiscal responsibility. I have learned from Mr. Montgomery that financial management may not be a popular nor exciting issue, but it is extremely important. Last year, I witnessed Mr. Montgomery single-handedly organize and manage a Sustainability Fair that drew over 1,000 participants. Through good fiscal and people management, Mr. Montgomery created an event that actually made money with-out charging an entrance or vendor fee. This could not have been done with-out his amazing ability to manage details while keeping the larger goals and objectives in mind.

Mr. Montgomery's teaching and management experience, reputation for making good choices and working well with others makes him an ideal candidate. I am confident that he will make a positive contribution to the Board of Regents and ask that you support his appointment. If you have any questions or would like more background information please do not hesitate to contact me at 808-250-6589 or at flammerfamily@aol.com.

Mahalo nui loa,


Gina Flammer, President
Kula Community Association

LATE

Hawai'i
Women's
Political
Caucus

P.O. Box 11946
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96828
(808) 732-4987

Faye Kennedy
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Director

Gladys Gerlich-Hayes
Director

Joy Kobashigawa Lewis
Director

Alice Tucker
Director

A State Chapter of the
National Women's
Political Caucus

DATE: April 13, 2010

TO: Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair
Senate Higher Education Committee
Senator Norman Sakamoto, Vice Chair
and Committee Members

FROM: Faye Kennedy, President
Hawai'i Women's Political Caucus (HWPC)

RE: GM 377 Matthew Williams
GM 378 Chuck Gee
GM 379 Ronald Montgomery

Tuesday, 4/13/10 Room 329 1:15 p.m.

The Hawai'i Women's Political Caucus (HWPC) is very concerned and disappointed that Governor Lingle has nominated three men to serve on the UH Board of Regents at a time when fourteen of the fifteen regents are already men.

We find it shocking that our governor has shown so little regard for gender equity and diversity when there are so many qualified women available. The fact that she is the first female to hold this office in Hawai'i makes these nominations even more mystifying and disturbing. As there are more women than men enrolled in the UH system, this compounds the affront to our sense of fair play.

The HWPC is a multi-partisan organization committed to increasing the numbers of qualified women to elected and appointed offices and bettering the lives of women, families and marginalized groups. We consider education at every level to be fundamental to our mission.

While we are not commenting on any of the male nominees under consideration today, we appreciate the opportunity to express our very serious concerns about the lack of balance and gender equity reflected in these nominations.

From: Alan Kaufman [kaufman@maui.net]
Sent: Wednesday, April 07, 2010 11:48 AM
To: HRE Testimony
Subject: GM 379 DATE:April 13, 2010

Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii, Gubernatorial Nominee, RONALD D. MONTGOMERY, for a term to expire 6-30-2015.

I know Mr. Montgomery from serving with him on the Board of Directors of the Kula Community Association. While both knowledgeable and articulate, I admire him primarily for his open mind. When presented with facts that are contrary to his opinion, he has the strength of character to change his mind. I wish all public servants possessed this skill set. Mr. Montgomery will be a worthy addition to the University's Board of Regents.

Sincerely,

Alan Kaufman, DVM
POB 297
Kula, Hi. 96790
808 878 6682
808 870 9861 (cell)
866 403 7290 (toll free fax)

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, April 07, 2010 12:01 PM
To: HRE Testimony
Cc: steve.phillips@live.com
Subject: Testimony for GM379 on 4/13/2010 1:15:00 PM

Testimony for HRE 4/13/2010 1:15:00 PM GM379

Conference room: 329
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Steve Phillips
Organization: Individual
Address: 46 Polohina Ln. Lahaina, HI
Phone: 808-665-0645
E-mail: steve.phillips@live.com
Submitted on: 4/7/2010

Comments:

I wish to offer my support for Ron Montgomery to be accepted on the University of Hawaii Board of Regents. I have had the opportunity to work with Ron in the Upcountry Sustainability Group on Maui. His leadership and commitment was outstanding.

From: DOREEN GOMES [doreengomes@me.com]
Sent: Thursday, April 08, 2010 12:38 PM
To: HRE Testimony
Cc: DOREEN GOMES
Subject: University of Hawaii Board of Regents

Date: Tuesday, April 13, 2010
Time: 1:15 p.m.

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair
Senator Norman Sakamoto, Vice-Chair
State Capitol, Conference Room 329
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Subject: Ronald D. Montgomery, Nominee

Dear Committee Members,

Aloha. I humbly ask that Ronald D. Montgomery be given the highest consideration in his quest to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii. Through his leadership, the community will be recipients of a person with unquestionable integrity.

Mr. Montgomery has proven his commitment to promoting higher education, working with diversified groups, and most importantly his contribution to community service.

I stand firm on his behalf of character and abilities for this honored, prestigious and significant position and sincerely hope that you will consider my recommendation.

Sincerely,

Doreen N. Gomes

Doreen N. Gomes
322, Pueo Drive
Kula, Maui, HI 96790

(808) 281-5112

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Saturday, April 10, 2010 3:40 PM
To: HRE Testimony
Cc: bobbiepatnode@fastmail.fm
Subject: Testimony for GM379 on 4/13/2010 1:15:00 PM

Testimony for HRE 4/13/2010 1:15:00 PM GM379

Conference room: 329
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Bobbie Patnode
Organization: Individual
Address: 16547 Haleakala Hwy Kula, HI 96790
Phone: 8088760140
E-mail: bobbiepatnode@fastmail.fm
Submitted on: 4/10/2010

Comments:

I support Ron Montgomery as a member of the Board of Regents. I have known Ron for more than two years as a member of the Board of Directors of the Kula Community Association, and I have witnessed and been impressed by his reliable dedication to community service and personal principles. In particular I was very impressed last year with the leadership he demonstrated in organizing the first KCA Sustainability Expo.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, April 11, 2010 8:23 AM
To: HRE Testimony
Cc: maucrowe@mailshack.com
Subject: Testimony for GM379 on 4/13/2010 1:15:00 PM

Testimony for HRE 4/13/2010 1:15:00 PM GM379

Conference room: 329
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Jim Crowe
Organization: Individual
Address: 30 Alanui Pl Kula Hawaii
Phone: 808 876 1975
E-mail: maucrowe@mailshack.com
Submitted on: 4/11/2010

Comments:

I know Ron Montgomery in his position of President of the Kula Community Association Board of Directors. Ron possesses a unique gift of problem solving. He states solutions succinctly and clearly.

Ron Montgomery expertly develops effective, trusting relationships with peers and community members. He is a successful and creative advocate of community populations and organizations.